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CARE of the BROOD SOW

FEEDING AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SOW DURING THE PERIODS OF FLUSHING, GESTATION, FARROWING AND NURSING

NORTH CAROLINA
STATE COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND ENGINEERING
AND
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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CARE OF THE BROOD SOW

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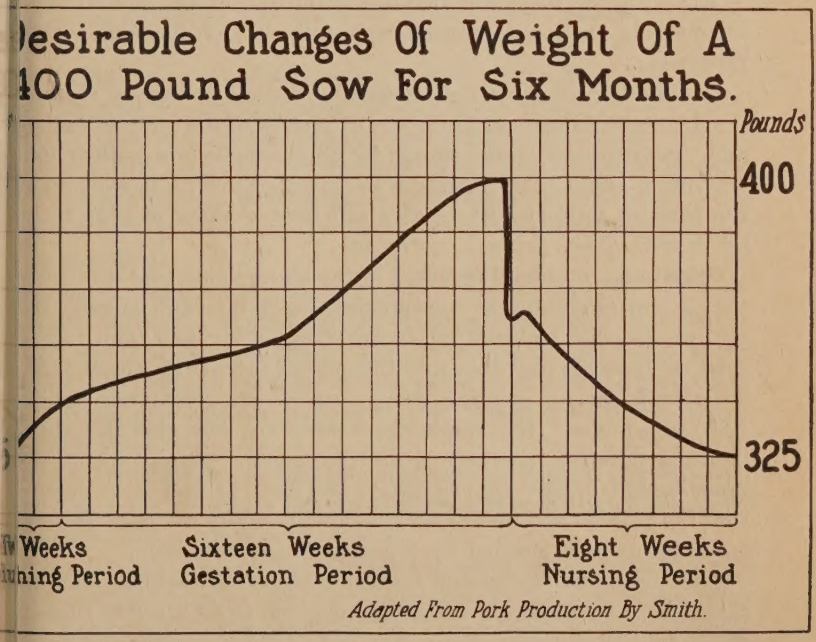
ANIMAL INDUSTRY DIVISION

ıe chart below shows graphically, changes which are desirable in weight of a brood sow during a six months period from two ks prior to breeding, through gestation and a nursing period of t weeks.



lushing. During this period of two weeks more or less, the sow ld be in a healthy condition, putting on gains at a rate approach- one pound daily. Her ration should contain a liberal proportion itrogenous or protein feeds, some of which should be of an animal rce, such as fish meal, tankage, or milk in some form, and wheat feed should constitute a liberal percentage of the whole.

ive pounds, dry weight, of the following mixture fed in the form thick slop, and about the same of shelled corn, or eight to ten s, according to size is a good daily feed at this time. The slop be given in the morning and the corn at night.

Slop Mixture No. 2

	Parts	Pounds
Fish meal	1	20
Corn meal	3	60
Red dog	1	20
To make	5 parts	100 pounds

When corn is high in price as compared with low grade middl the proportions of wheat mill feed and corn meal may be reve using middlings, and the red dog may be omitted.

There can be no doubt that the condition of the sow at the of breeding has a very considerable influence on the number of farrowed.

In this respect the word "condition" does not apply so muc the degree of fatness or fleshiness as it does to the state of her h and "growthiness"—she should by all means be in a healthy gai condition, and a little attention to this matter will be well repa the form of uniform litters of a sufficient number of pigs to in profit if they are properly cared for.

Gestation. It should be noted in the above chart that it is desi that a sow, weighing in normal flesh—not fat—400 pounds sh two weeks prior to breeding, weigh 325 pounds, and that durin interval between that time and the date of farrowing, she should 75 pounds, or an average daily gain of approximately six-t (0.6) of a pound. It is neither necessary nor desirable that this be uniform daily, but there should be constant gain to insure pr nourishment of the unborn litter, and to that end it is imper that the feed be of a character which will supply the bone and m forming material needed by the sow during this time.

The needs of sows having the run of a pasture will be well m this respect by the feeds outlined above, but in addition to these she should have constant access to pure drinking water and mine a satisfactory mixture of which is made by combining acid phosp 10 pounds, hardwood ashes or ground limestone 10 pounds, and mon salt 2 pounds; these should be thoroughly mixed and kept u cover.

The daily amount of feed specified above—10 pounds—shoul reduced very soon after breeding, and from that time until far ing, it should be regulated by the gains of the sow.

This is done that gains may continue until the date of farro without making the animal too fat at farrowing time, when

ld be carrying all the flesh she can conveniently—that is to say, out being clumsy, as the safety of the pigs require ease of move- on her part, and this is interfered with by excess fat.

e whole corn may gradually be reduced, and should disappear ely from the daily ration about a week before date of farrow.

ercise is important, and if necessary, sows should be compelled ke it, but it is usually possible to arrange sleeping and feeding ters in a way to insure it.

ws on pasture seldom suffer from constipation, but should this ition occur it may be corrected by a limited amount of linseed eal added to the slop mixture, and its price as a rule justifies its n a slop mixture for brood sows, as it is one of the high protein s.

arrowing. The greatest assistance that can be given the sow at owing time is through preparation for the event before hand. operation consists of gaining her confidence through gentle lling, giving attention to her physical condition as already men- ed and providing a suitable place, preferably an individual house olied with fenders or guard rails to prevent her crushing the pigs nst the wall.

is house should have a tight roof and only a door two feet wide three feet high should be left permanently open; all cracks ugh which a cold searching wind may find entrance should be ened. The idea in building such a house should be the protection ew born pigs against extremely cold weather with the use of little bedding.

uring a bad night an empty phosphate sack tacked at the top he door opening, and a lighted lantern suspended from the ridge makes such a house comfortable.

rovision should be made to allow the entrance of sunshine, this be done by hinging one-half of each side of the roof to the other in such a manner that it may be turned back during fine days. uch a house is described in Extension Circular Number 132, which be had upon request of your County Agent or the Animal In- try Division.

he house should be located on dry land, and the trough from ch the sow eats should not be surrounded with mud which she carry on her feet to the house, thus making the bedding first ap and later dusty, both of which conditions are bad for the pigs. he bedding should consist of a limited amount of short absorbent erial; chopped corn stover is ideal for this purpose, next in order

perhaps is pine straw with the chopped straw of some cereal suc
oats, wheat or rye about equal in value; chopped hay or grass
equally as good—but a bare tight board floor is much better
long, coarse hay or straw in which the pigs are almost helpless
therefore unable to avoid being crushed when the sow lies dow
under which they may crawl and be crushed by the sow, she b
unable to see them.

Before the bedding is put in, the house, if an old one, shoul
cleaned and disinfected by giving it a thorough scrubbing wit
old broom and a strong hot suds of lye, soap and water, followe
spraying with a strong solution of any of the coal tar dips, spe
attention being given to all cracks and crevices, after this
abundance of sunshine is fine, and a good coat of white was
desirable on the walls and under side of the roof.

If possible the house should be located on land where hogs h
not run since the land has grown a crop.

Upon being introduced to such sanitary quarters, it is only fit
that the sow herself should receive attention, and if the weathe
suitable a thorough spraying with one of the coal tar dips u
according to directions, and with especial attention given to
udder is a wise precaution.

This may be followed by an application of crude oil to advanta

The sow should be installed in her new quarters at least a w
before her farrowing date in order that she may become accusto
to them, and during this time it is wise to form a rather intim
acquaintance with her to the end that she may not resent the he
man's presence should it be desirable to enter the house while sh
farrowing.

Before considering arrangements complete, it is well to provid
box, preferably made of one-half inch material, about one foot wi
of similar depth and two feet long with cleat handles or finger ho
bored in each end. This box is to be used in removing pigs fr
the farrowing house when necessary, and should be used for no ot
purpose and always kept in the same place, where it will be c
venient when wanted in a hurry.

Having prepared the house and bedding as described, it is seld
necessary to do more. Quiet, and the absence of anything of
exciting or disturbing character are very desirable at this time

Occasional observation, either silent, or at least accompanied
no noise of a startling nature, is all that is necessary so long as
occasion calling for assistance to either the sow or a pig arises.

In the case of a nervous or excitable sow the above is about all that can be done, and it is much better to leave her strictly alone than to arouse her temper by unwelcome intrusion.

Where a sow is quiet and appears to really enjoy your presence, as signified by occasional friendly grunts, it is sometimes possible through being present to save a pig which otherwise would have died.

In such cases about all that can be done is to see that the newly farrowed pig suffers no obstruction to breathing, and place him in position to nurse.

It is not a bad idea to shorten the umbilical cord to about one and one-half inches; this is done by grasping it firmly between the thumb nail and side of the forefinger of each hand, each side of the place where it is to be broken, and pulling it in two.

There are occasional cases where a gilt farrowing her first litter does not resent the presence of the herdsman, but during the course of farrowing and sometimes after completion, shows an utter lack of the maternal instinct, snapping at new born pigs when they come near her nose, and otherwise showing a nervous condition.

It is under such conditions that the presence of the herdsman is most desirable.

Any attempt to correct matters through punishment such as slapping her will only result in aggravation, and serve to increase her unnatural dislike for the pigs.

The box, which has been described for use in such cases, should be at hand, and the pigs quietly placed in it so they may be removed beyond reach of the sow if necessary, and there is little to be gained through attempting to change her attitude toward her pigs until farrowing is completed.

After the last pig is farrowed and safely in the box, pains have diminished and the sow relaxed, a little manipulation and massaging of the udder will usually be followed by a shifting of position on the part of the sow in an effort to present the lower row of teats; this effort will be accompanied by a series of encouraging grunts which the knowing herdsman will recognize as an invitation, and one of the huskiest pigs should be quickly but quietly placed at a teat and immediately followed by others carefully handled to prevent their squealing should the sow show no resentment; if she objects, the pigs should be quickly gathered up with as little noise as possible and, after she has again become quiet the whole process should be repeated.

After she has allowed them to nurse they should not be left wit her but removed for about an hour when the former action should b repeated, and before leaving them with her, one should be started o a tour around her head.

If she fails to display temper when he climbs against her nos and face, it is safe to conclude that the trouble is over, and the pig may be left in her care. Sometimes a young sow is very exaspera ing, and several attempts must be made before success is attaine but perseverance and patience will win out eventually and it is tim well spent, as it usually results not only in saving the litter, but i preventing the sow from becoming a pig eater.

Feeding. It is customary to advise the withholding of all fee for a period of twenty-four hours after farrowing, and as a rul this may be sound advice—but like most general rules, this one ha exceptions.

After a litter of pigs is safely farrowed the most desirable thin is as little restlessness and movement on the part of the sow a possible during the next twenty-four hours while the pigs gathe strength with which to protect themselves from being injured by th sow when she moves about and lies down.

If a sow farrows during the night and in the morning comes to th trough apparently hungry and is not satisfied with water, she ma be given a very thin slop made up of wheat bran with a liberal hand ful of linseed oil meal. This may be repeated at the next regula feeding hour, but caution must be exercised against rich or heav feeds such as corn and tankage.

A good way to increase the feed is by gradually making the slo thicker.

It should constantly be borne in mind at this time that the greates danger lies in over feeding, filthy feed and damp bedding.

In the case of a heavy milk producing sow it may require tw weeks to get her on full feed with safety to the pigs, while light milk producers may be getting all they will clean up at the end of a week after farrowing.

Close attention should be given the troughs, and corn should b added to the ration gradually.

When once a sow is safely on full feed and the pigs doing nicely and beginning to help themselves to feed, there is nothing better fo them than shelled corn and red dog in separate compartments of a self feeder where they can get to it through a creep.

They are now approaching a period of tribulation; castration of e boars, vaccination and weaning should all come at an early age, t not at the same time, if they can come at intervals of about a week ey will soon be over with, and at a minimum of expense and shock. At the age of about seven weeks a good brand of either tankage fish meal should be added to a third compartment of their self eder and the sow may be removed when they are eight weeks old id going strong on the self feeder.

Under the above conditions the absence of the sow is scarcely ɔticed providing she is moved beyond their hearing, and weaning accomplished with no serious check in the growth of the pigs, hich should at this time average about thirty-five pounds in weight.

Rebreeding. If the sow has been on a full ration of rich feed uring the last five weeks of her nursing period, her milk flow will e heavy and if it seems wise to do so she may be returned to the ɔt a couple of times for the pigs to nurse her and thus avoid in- ammation of the udder and the possible loss of one or more teats.

As a rule within a week after weaning her pigs, the sow will ɔme in season, and if she has been fed liberally as described, she ill be in ideal condition for rebreeding, but if she has been allowed ɔ run down seriously in flesh she should be allowed to pass this eriod and be fed liberally through a flushing period of three weeks hen she should again come in season and be bred.

Clipping Teeth and Litter Marking

If the teeth are to be clipped and a litter mark given the pigs ıere will never be a better time for doing it than before they have ver nursed.

After they are in the box they should be carried far enough from ıe sow to insure her not hearing any protest they may make, and ɔr the purpose, there should be at hand a pair of small side cutting liers, or, in the absence of these a pair of small tin snips will answer.

New born pigs should be given a litter mark and have their teeth lipped as soon as possible after they are farrowed so that there will e less danger of them losing their identity or injuring their dam r litter mates.

The matter of litter marks is of particular importance since some f the breed associations require it before they will register an nimal. Then too, it is of value to the owner of a grade herd, because

by this method he can select gilts from his best producing sows an not necessarily depend on individuality alone in choosing his futu brood sows.

For making a litter mark a leather punch of the pincher type wit a tube about the size of a lead pencil may be used.

If a notch is cut from the edge of the ear, using about two-third of the diameter of such a punch, the notch, when the animal is grow will be about the size of a man's thumb nail.

In addition to these two instruments, an old phosphate sack wi come in handy.

The operator should kneel on both knees, spread the sack acros the knees, set the pig between the knees with its back toward th operator, and to the left, insert the forefinger and thumb of the le hand in opposite sides of the pig's mouth just back of the fron teeth and with the right hand clip the eight small needle-like teet as smoothly as possible, exercising care to avoid injuring the gum lips or tongue.

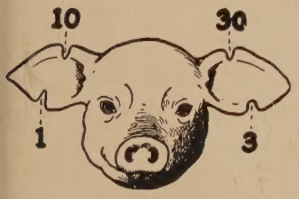
When this is done lay aside the pliers or snips and with the punc make the ear mark by which the litter is to be identified.

A little practice will enable one to clip the teeth and mark the ear of a litter in a surprisingly short time.

THE LOVEJOY SYSTEM OF LITTER MARKING

Litter marking is done for the purpose of identifying pigs of certain breeding. Therefore, all of the pigs of one litter, being of the same breeding, are given the same litter mark. This mark should be recorded in the herd register for future reference.

The simplicity of the Lovejoy system of marking pigs, is its strongest recommendation, it being necessary to remember only the two numbers "1" and "3" and their location in the ear, to be able to find any number from one to one hundred.



$10 + 30 + 1 + 3 = 44$

$10 + 30 + 1 + 3 + 3 = 47$

Facing the animal and reading from left to right: A notch in the bottom of the ear at your left indicates "1"; a notch in the top of the same ear indicates "10"; a notch in the bottom of the ear at your right indicates "3"; a notch in the top of the same ear indicates "0".

Two notches side by side indicate twice as much as one notch. The total of the numbers indicated by the notches, is the number of the pig's litter mark. This sounds complicated, but it is really very simple, as a brief study of the above cuts will show.

With the exception of disinfecting houses and sows as described, and clipping the pigs' teeth, all of the matters treated above are essential to success in raising pigs, and owing to lack of the sanitary precautions and the clipping of teeth, many litters have been lost, and many nervous but otherwise promising young sows have been started on a pig-eating career, primarily induced by a bite from the almost needle sharp teeth of a battling pig of tender age which was struggling for sustenance, and at the same time inflicting wounds on the face and lips of a litter mate which made an inviting place for the entrance of germs which might later cause death.

Clipping the pigs' teeth and practicing good sanitary methods are with very cheap forms of insurance, since untold thousands of dollars have been lost by the neglect of these two precautions.